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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	DODE-00	DOTE-00
	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	VC-00	H-01
	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00
	P-00	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00

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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7216
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RWANDA COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 005464

SIPDIS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH
LONDON FOR CHARLES GURNEY
PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS
USUN FOR HOLBROOKE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/27/10
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE CLOSER TO PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM DROC

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REFTEL: HARARE 5137

CLASSIFIED BY DCM EARL M. IRVING. REASONS: 1.5 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY: AT A SEPTEMBER 26 FAREWELL LUNCH WITH THE DCM, THE MFA'S UNDERSECRETARY FOR AFRICA DAVID HAMADZIRIPI REPORTED THAT ZIMBABWE IS CLOSE TO WITHDRAWING UP TO HALF ITS TROOPS FROM THE DROC. HAMADZIRIPI DESCRIBED KABILA'S BRIEF TRIP TO LUANDA ON SEPTEMBER 24 AS A LAST-DITCH ATTEMPT TO GET ANGOLA TO FILL ZIMBABWE'S SHOES. THE POLITICAL PRESSURE IN ZIMBABWE TO WITHDRAW HAS BECOME TOO GREAT FOR MUGABE TO IGNORE, ACCORDING TO THE UNDERSECRETARY. HE JUST RETURNED FROM A WEEK-LONG TRIP TO KINSHASA, WHERE HE WILL SOON MANAGE A NEW OFFICE STAFFED BY DROC ALLIES DESIGNED TO COORDINATE PEACE EFFORTS IN THE REGION. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) ON SEPTEMBER 26, DCM AND POLOFF HOSTED A FAREWELL LUNCH FOR UNDERSECRETARY FOR AFRICA DAVID HAMADZIRIPI, WHO HAS BEEN ONE OF THE EMBASSY'S MOST FRANK AND STRAIGHTFORWARD CONTACTS IN ZIMBABWE'S MFA. HAMADZIRIPI IS BEING TRANSFERRED TO KINSHASA (APPARENTLY SOMEWHAT AGAINST HIS WILL) TO MANAGE AN OFFICE BEING SET UP BY THE DROC'S ALLIES TO OVERSEE THE PEACE PROCESS THERE. THE OFFICE WILL BE HEADED BY A ZIMBABWEAN "SPECIAL ASSISTANT" WITH AMBASSADORIAL RANK (WHOM HAMADZIRIPI DID NOT NAME), WITH HAMADZIRIPI IN CHARGE OF DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT. REPRESENTATIVES FROM ANGOLA, NAMIBIA, AND DROC WILL BE POSTED TO THE OFFICE;

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CONGOLESE WILL FILL THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF POSITIONS.

3. (C) ONE OF THE OFFICE'S FIRST MISSIONS WILL APPARENTLY BE TO OVERSEE THE WITHDRAWAL OF UP TO HALF OF ZIMBABWE'S 12,000 TROOPS IN THE DROC. HAMADZIRIPI STATED THAT ZIMBABWE BEGAN CONTEMPLATING THE WITHDRAWAL TWO MONTHS AGO, AND IT HAS BEGUN THE NECESSARY PLANNING. HE REPORTED THAT COMMANDER OF THE ZIMBABWE DEFENSE FORCES (ZDF) VITALIS ZVINAVASHE HAD JUST COMPLETED A TRIP TO KINSHASA IN WHICH HE INFORMED KABILA THAT ZIMBABWE IS REALLY WITHDRAWING. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THE WITHDRAWAL WOULD PROCEED WHETHER OR NOT ANGOLA IS ABLE TO STEP INTO THE ZIMBABWEAN ARMY'S POSITIONS. HAMADZIRIPI STATED THAT KABILA WENT TO LUANDA SEPTEMBER 24 TO CONVINCE ANGOLA TO FILL ZIMBABWE'S SHOES, BUT DID NOT RECEIVE MANY ENCOURAGING SIGNS. ALTHOUGH ZIMBABWE WOULD PROBABLY COMPLETE ITS PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL BEFORE THE TWO-MONTH EXTENSION ON THE MONUC OBSERVER FORCE IS UP, HAMADZIRIPI ITERATED THAT THE PRESENCE OF ZIMBABWE'S FORCES WAS NOT LINKED TO THE MONUC DEPLOYMENT. ZIMBABWE HAS THE FREEDOM TO ROTATE ITS FORCES OR CHANGE THEIR NUMBERS, JUST AS UGANDA HAS DONE, WITHOUT AFFECTING ITS

COMMITMENT TO KABILA'S GOVERNMENT, "EXCEPT WE'LL REALLY DO IT," HE ADDED WRYLY.

14. (C) HAMADZIRIPI OPINED THAT THE DOMESTIC POLITICAL PRESSURE FOR A WITHDRAWAL WAS BECOMING TOO GREAT FOR MUGABE TO IGNORE. THE UNDERSECRETARY BELIEVED IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR MUGABE TO SHOW SIGNIFICANT MOVEMENT IN THIS AREA BEFORE THE 2002 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION AND THUS REMOVE IT AS A POTENTIALLY DAMAGING CAMPAIGN ISSUE.

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(NOTE: FINANCE MINISTER SIMBA MAKONI RECENTLY REVEALED IN PARLIAMENT THAT ZIMBABWE HAD SPENT US\$200 MILLION ON ITS DROC DEPLOYMENT SINCE THE WAR BEGAN. A SEPTEMBER 26 FRONT PAGE ARTICLE IN THE INDEPENDENT "DAILY NEWS" REPORTED THAT KINSHASA OWES ZIMBABWE ARMY TRAINERS US\$800,000 IN BACK PAY. END NOTE.) WITH A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL, THE GOZ IS ALSO DETERMINED TO SEND KABILA A MESSAGE THAT IT WILL NO LONGER TOLERATE FOOT-DRAGGING ON PEACE EFFORTS AND THAT IT IS SERIOUS ABOUT DISENGAGING FROM THE DROC.

15. (C) COMMENT: HAMADZIRIPI HAS PROVED TO BE A VERY RELIABLE POINT MAN FOR THE EMBASSY ON ZIMBABWE'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE DROC, AND IT WOULD BE SURPRISING TO FIND HIS REPLACEMENT AS OPEN AND STRAIGHTFORWARD. (HE HINTED THAT HIS UNNAMED SUCCESSOR'S ACCESS TO FOREIGN MINISTER MUDENGE IS NOT NEARLY AS GOOD AS HIS OWN.) WE CAN BELIEVE HIM WHEN HE SAYS THE GOZ IS PREPARING TO WITHDRAW FROM THE DROC. HIS REASONING TRACKS WELL WITH DEVELOPMENTS AND WHAT OTHER SOURCES HAVE BEEN TELLING US. ALTHOUGH HE DID NOT MENTION IT, EMMERSON MNANGAGWA, SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE AND MUGABE'S RIGHT-HAND MAN IN THE DROC, TOLD US HE WAS VISITING KINSHASA DURING THE SAME WEEK AS HAMADZIRIPI, PRESUMABLY TO APPLY PRESSURE ON KABILA TO ABIDE BY LUSAKA (SEE REFTTEL). THE GOZ IS

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CERTAINLY MAKING CLEAR TO KINSHASA THAT ITS PATIENCE IS WEARING THIN. EVEN A PARTIAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE DROC WOULD HELP PLUG THE DISASTROUS LEAK IN THE GOZ'S SINKING FINANCIAL SHIP AND SEND A STRONG SIGNAL TO DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN OBSERVERS ALIKE THAT THE DROC DRAIN ON ZIMBABWE WILL COME TO AN END SOONER RATHER THAN LATER.

16. (C) DAO COMMENT: THE WITHDRAWAL OF HALF OF ZIMBABWE'S TROOPS CURRENTLY IN THE DROC SOUNDS CORRECT, BUT THIS WOULD LIKELY BE DONE OVER A SIX- TO 12-MONTH TIMEFRAME. BEFORE ZIMBABWE RETURNS ITS TROOPS FROM THE DROC, THERE WILL NEED TO BE AN APPARATUS IN PLACE TO OVERSEE ZIMBABWE'S ECONOMIC INTERESTS (MINING AND FORESTRY CONCESSIONS, FOR EXAMPLE). ONE OPTION BEING CONSIDERED IS TO RETIRE THE ZDF'S TROOPS IN THE DROC FROM THE MILITARY AND GIVE THEM SECURITY JOBS TO PROTECT ZIMBABWE'S DROC CONCESSIONS. THIS WOULD ACCOMPLISH TWO MAIN OBJECTIVES: FIRST, TO HAVE A FORCE STILL IN THE DROC TO PROTECT ZIMBABWE'S INTERESTS, AND SECOND, TO

ALLOW THE OVERALL MILITARY STRUCTURE TO BE DOWNSIZED.
ZIMBABWE IS LOOKING AT DOWNSIZING THE ZDF'S CURRENT
FORCE OF 34,000 TO 25,000. ADDITIONALLY, BRINGING A
PORTION OF THE MILITARY BACK FROM THE DROC WOULD ENABLE
PRESIDENT MUGABE TO REINFORCE DISTRICTS THAT ZANU-PF
LOST IN THE JUNE ELECTIONS. OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO
ZANU-PF ARE THE CITIES OF BULAWAYO, KWEKWE, AND MUTARE,
WHOSE GARRISONS ARE VIRTUALLY EMPTY FROM THE DROC
DEPLOYMENT. ALSO, WE WOULD SPECULATE THAT THE SPECIAL
ASSISTANT WITH AMBASSADORIAL RANK WHOM HAMADZIRIPI DID
NOT NAME COULD BE LTG CHIWENGA, CURRENTLY THE ZIMBABWE
NATIONAL ARMY COMMANDER; HE IS RUMORED TO BE RETIRING
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SOON FOR AN AMBASSADORIAL APPOINTMENT. LTG CHIWENGA HAS
BEEN INVOLVED IN THE DROC FROM THE BEGINNING AND WOULD
MAKE A GOOD WATCHDOG FOR ALL THOSE WHO HAVE BUSINESS
INTERESTS THERE.

MCDONALD

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